

How To Explore Singapore's World-Famous Sustainability Scene As A Tourist

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Every destination has a story, no matter how small.

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Singapore became an independent nation on August 9th, 1965.

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Though Singapore measures in at just over 733 square kilometers, this tiny Southeast Asian nation has established itself as one of the most innovative countries on the planet. From abundant public housing to a close-to-zero crime rate, the country has a wealth of cutting-edge initiatives across all sectors, and sustainability is no exception. For any tourists hoping to gain insight into the country's efforts to cut down on its carbon footprint and exist in harmony with nature, the following destinations are a perfect fit.

On the other side of the Singapore River, the downtown core is equipped with the Oasia Hotel Downtown, a nature reserve and hotel all rolled into one. This stately property is adorned with a 27-meter vertical garden on its outer walls, ushering in all sorts of native Southeast Asian birdlife to nest—and while it may come as a surprise, it's far from the only verdant vertical garden found across the nation.

Established in June 2012, the iconic Gardens by the Bay perfectly exemplifies Singapore's steadfast dedication to environmental sustainability—and as an added bonus, it's one of the most dazzling attractions in all of Southeast Asia. Measuring in at 101 hectares, this sprawling nature park is best known for its wealth of towering metal "supertrees," each one harboring their own individual vertical garden packed with vibrant orchids and bromeliads. Meanwhile, just a few steps away, some truly innovative structures can be found gracing property grounds.

Home to a diverse array of ecosystems from across the globe, the Gardens by the Bay Flower Dome serves as the largest glass greenhouse on the planet, while the neighboring Cloud Forest is rife with lush gardens crowned by one of the earth's tallest indoor waterfalls. Both destinations house a treasure trove of rare and endangered flora, and the structures themselves are a master class in sustainability as well, superbly designed to utilize displacement cooling to reduce temperature in heavily-trafficked areas while warmer air is pumped out of the ceiling.

While there's no shortage of sustainability-focused operations in downtown Singapore, some of the nation's most fascinating farms can be found lining the Malaysian border—and perhaps most interestingly, not a single one is found on land. Known as “kelongs,” these large wooden platforms were traditionally built across Southeast Asia as makeshift fishing piers, while today, visitors can experience them from a sustainability-centered perspective on a [Let's Go Kelong](#) excursion.

Beginning at the SAF Yacht Club, this three-hour boat ride offers ample insight into the history and function of a modern kelong fish farm, cruising past many of the structures as well as Pulau Ubin, a sprawling Singaporean island that's home to lush forests, troops of monkeys, and wild boar. Perhaps most interestingly, the trip culminates with a voyage to the Smith Marine Floating Restaurant, a massive metal kelong that's home to classic local cuisine and rows of fish farms brimming with grouper, snapper, and sea bass.

Back on land, [Kok Fah Technology Farm](#) serves as one of Singapore's finest institutions for sustainable farming, operating for more than forty years in the remote western reaches of the country. In addition to traditional farming methods, Kok Fah operates one of the largest hydroponic farms in the nation, providing native Singaporeans with bok choy, okra, Thai basil, and a wealth of other produce grown on-site. On weekdays, the farm offers guided tours, allowing guests to explore the hydroponic greenhouse and even dine on a freshly-made salad from the gardens, while the weekend market is a must-visit for anyone hoping to stock up on herbs and greens.

While kelong fish farms and hydroponic greenhouses both play a role in Singapore's food industry, one cutting-edge restaurant approaches sustainability from each step of the dining process. Launched in 2021 by Native co-founder Vijay Mudaliar, [Analogue](#) has mastered the art of flavorful plant-based drinking and dining, equipped with a menu that's completely vegan. Flavorful favorites like the crispy nuggetz, poutine, and agave-forward Cactus cocktail all prove that you don't need any animal protein to achieve incredible flavor—and Analogue's commitment to sustainability doesn't stop there. A large portion of the restaurant's tables were created from mycelium spores as an alternative to using wood, while the centerpiece of the restaurant—the wraparound bar—was 3D-printed from more than 3,500 pounds of recycled plastic.

For any visiting cocktail aficionados, no trip to Singapore is complete without visiting [Long Bar](#), a historic watering hole in the world-famous Raffles Hotel. This venue has earned widespread acclaim as the birthplace of the Singapore Sling, a sweet gin cocktail that dates back to 1915—and in the modern era, this beloved drink is raising the bar for sustainability in the spirits space. Since 2021, Raffles has drastically reduced their carbon footprint by eliminating thousands of glass bottles from the supply chain, choosing to receive the bulk of their ingredients in reusable totes from [ecoSPIRITS](#). Furthering their commitment to the natural world, Raffles ensures that for every 25 slings sold, a native tree is planted in one of Indonesia's most fragmented rainforests.

Equipped with lush, wildlife-rich nature preserves and a fascinating culture that blends Chinese, Malay, and Tamil customs and traditions, Singapore serves as one of the most unique tourist destinations on the planet—and with each passing year, the nation furthers its commitment to bettering the lives of its residents and the flora and fauna that call Singapore home. As you plan your next trip to this pint-sized island nation, be sure to save some room in the itinerary to explore some of the most cutting-edge hotels, restaurants, and landmarks in all of Southeast Asia.